

contacting said collected B-cells with an antibody specific for a TSE-infected B-cell antigen for a time and under conditions to allow the formation of an antibody-antigen complex; and

detecting the amount of said antibody-antigen complex indicative of diagnosis of transmissible spongiform encephalopathy.

36. (Amended). A method of identifying TSE-infected T cells associated with transmissible spongiform encephalopathy in a test sample, the method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a test sample;

collecting T-cells from the test sample;

contacting said collected T-cells with an antibody specific for a TSE-infected T-cell antigen for a time and under conditions to allow the formation of an antibody-antigen complex; and

detecting the amount of said antibody-antigen complex indicative of diagnosis of transmissible spongiform encephalopathy.

37. (Amended). A method of identifying TSE-infected B cell and TSE-infected T cells associated with transmissible spongiform encephalopathy in a test sample, the method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a test sample;

collecting B-cells and T-cells from said test sample;

contacting said B-cells and T-cells with an antibody specific for a TSE-infected B cell and TSE-infected T cell antigen for a time and under conditions to allow the formation of an antibody-antigen complex; and

detecting the amount of said antibody-antigen complex indicative of diagnosis of transmissible spongiform encephalopathy.

38. (Amended). A method for identifying the presence of prions in TSE-infected B-cells, wherein said prions are associated with transmissible spongiform encephalopathy, the method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a test sample;  
collecting B-cells from said test sample;  
contacting said B-cells with a ligand, wherein said ligand is an anti-PrP antibody capable of identifying prions in TSE-infected B-cells associated with transmissible spongiform encephalopathy for a time and under conditions to produce an antibody-antigen complex; and  
determining the presence of said prions according to the degree of interaction between the ligand and the prion present in the TSE-infected B cell.

39. (Amended). A method for identifying the presence of prions in TSE-infected T-cells, wherein said prions are associated with transmissible spongiform encephalopathy, the method comprising the steps of:

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obtaining a test sample;  
collecting T-cells from said test sample;  
contacting said T-cells with a ligand, wherein said ligand is an anti PrP antibody capable of identifying prions in TSE-infected T-cells associated with transmissible spongiform encephalopathy for a time and under conditions to produce an antibody-antigen complex, and  
determining the presence of said prion according to the degree of interaction between the ligand and the prion present in the TSE-infected T cell.

40. (Amended). A method for identifying the presence of prions in TSE-infected B-cells and TSE -infected T-cells, wherein said prions are associated with transmissible spongiform encephalopathy, the method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a test sample;  
collecting B-cells and T-cells from said test sample;  
contacting said B-cells and T-cells with a ligand, wherein said ligand is an anti-PrP antibody capable of identifying prions in TSE-infected B-cells and TSE-infected T-cells associated with transmissible spongiform encephalopathy for a time and under conditions to produce an antibody-antigen complex; and